

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS SHEILA KUEHL AND
HILDA L. SOLIS

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Countywide Career Pathways Program

Although recent data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the California Employment Development Department report record low unemployment rates--national and state unemployment rates at 3.9 percent and 4.1 percent respectively--many segments of our population continue to be left behind. Additionally, although the unemployment rate in Los Angeles County, which has been consistently higher than the national average, currently stands at a low 4.4 percent, and recent reports of consistent job and economic growth indicate a long overdue recovery from the recession of the last decade, these figures do not account for LA County residents who face the highest barriers to employment, including the underemployed, the working poor, those experiencing homelessness, young people, poor families, and re-entry residents, among others.

In many cases, these same populations are dependent on the County's safety net services and programs. While County programs provide critical services and basic

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SOLIS _____

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BARGER _____

KUEHL _____

financial support, they are not, by themselves, sufficient to lift individuals and families out of poverty and homelessness. It would be far better for County services and programs to include and be coupled with a strategy to ensure that our most vulnerable residents have meaningful opportunities for quality employment.

The County has led on efforts to create economic opportunity and employment equity in the region, specifically for residents experiencing barriers to employment. These efforts have sought to encourage and support County contractors and other employers in the private sector to hire residents from communities experiencing higher levels of poverty and residents with barriers to employment – including the Local and Targeted Worker Program, Youth@Work Program, and contracting language requiring vendors to recruit GAIN and GROW recipients for open positions.

In recent years, the County, with leadership from this Board, has developed programs that provide County work experience for these targeted populations, including the Youth Bridges Program and Temp LA. In the past year, the Worker Education & Resource Center (WERC) with oversight from the Chief Executive Office, has looked more closely at opportunities for County employment of targeted populations and will launch four or five pilot career pathway programs in partnership with selected departments. The model outlined in WERC's June 2018 report provides a solid foundation on which to build a Countywide Career Pathways Program that can be expanded to most, if not all, County departments. The inclusion of a special focus on our own clients and beneficiaries is appropriate to meeting this overall goal and would

bring attention to a population that has not been targeted before in a coordinated way for career skills development and County employment.

As the largest employer in the region – and one that provides quality, family-sustaining jobs that build the region’s middle-class – the County has the opportunity to demonstrate leadership in providing career path job opportunities to residents with the greatest vulnerabilities and the highest barriers to employment, including our own beneficiaries.

WE, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors:

1. Direct the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to work with the Department of Human Resources (DHR) and other County departments to determine the most feasible ways to establish County and department goals to recruit, hire and train individuals from targeted populations, as defined by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), with a special focus on County client populations who are currently receiving or have recently received services, including, but not limited to, single mothers participating in CalWorks/GAIN, Transition Age Youth (TAY) and youth exiting the juvenile justice system, women and men coming out of County detention facilities, residents receiving homeless services, and any others receiving safety net services;
2. Direct CEO and DHR to expand upon the June 2018 WERC report and evaluate current and future operational needs across County job classifications and work with County departments to identify entry-level

classifications and number of positions with opportunities for career pathways within the County;

3. Direct CEO in collaboration with DHR and other departments to develop a method for designing a plan for a Countywide Career Pathways Program that includes high road training components that support and ensure the success of participants to secure permanent County employment. The plan should include identification of key partners – County departments, community based organizations, training and educational institutions – and necessary resources, and could include a working group focused on the subject. The plan should also include coordination across departments to ensure the plan is complimentary and not duplicative of Board programs and policies or any ongoing workforce recruitment programs by County Departments;
4. Direct CEO to report back to the board within 120 days with a summary analysis of the issues set forth in items 1-3 as well as recommended next steps for implementing a program that will deliver quantifiable gains in the hiring of individuals with barriers to employment with a special focus on County safety net service recipients. The report should also identify any obstacles to achieving the goals set out above and changes that may be necessary to specific recruitment, application and exam practices.